

A Self-Help Guide to Documenting Volunteer Service

In determining applicants' qualifications for Federal jobs, all work experience is considered, regardless of whether any compensation was received. If the experience is pertinent to the position in question, unpaid experiences are given equal credit.

When you are considering applying for a Federal job, first determine the qualifications and other job-related criteria required for that particular position or group of positions. The best source for this information is the job announcement.

A job announcement will typically include information such as opening and closing dates for applications and the nature of the vacancy (e.g., full or part-time, temporary or permanent). Additionally, there is usually a brief description of the duties of the position and the required qualifications.

Job announcements are commonly posted in Federal Personnel Offices and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Job Information Centers. Offices with "Dial-A-Vacancy" telephone numbers are listed in the White Pages of the telephone directory under "U.S. Government". Newspapers and employment publications also have information about job openings.

Qualifications are stated in terms of experience and training requirements, as well as minimum physical requirements. Often there will be a brief statement of the qualifications required followed by a note to "See X-118".

The "X-118" refers to the OPM Handbook X-118, Qualification Standards for Positions Under the General Schedule. This handbook is available in the reference section of the many public libraries and at Civilian Personnel Offices. These standards describe the experience, skills, knowledge, and abilities required for filling positions. Experience requirement in the X-118 will normally be divided into two types: general and specialized. The standard defines what constitutes general and specialized experience and how many years (or months) of each are required for each specific type of position. There are some standards which require specific educational levels. Others permit certain formal education to be substituted for experience requirements. There are also some which require written tests.

EXAMPLE: A GS-4 Accounting Technician position requires two years of general experience. No specialized experience is required. General experience in this case is clerical work which has shown that you have math aptitude and ability, that you can be accurate and pay attention to detail, and that you have the ability to apply established procedures for recording and compiling data. For this type of work at this grade level, the standard also allows you to substitute formal education for the required experience. If you've completed university, junior college, business or commercial school courses which include bookkeeping or accounting, one-half academic year of study can be substituted for six months of experience. So two years of the appropriate coursework at the post-high school level would meet all the basic X-118 requirements for this Accounting Technician job.

You will need to determine the specific required qualifications from the announcement or the X-118 before you go further. If the position interests you and your paid or unpaid experience appears to meet that requirement, your next step is to start the application process.

The primary application form for federal jobs is the Personal Qualifications Statement (Standard Form 171), or the SF 171. You should complete each section of the SF 171 and any supplemental forms which a particular job announcement may require. You will notice that the OPM instructions for completing the SF 171 indicate that you may receive credit for pertinent religious, civic, welfare, service and organizational work performed with or without compensation. All the

items in the “experience” blocks of the form should be completed for a volunteer position the same as for a paid position.

It is important that you describe your experiences in a way that will make them easy to understand and evaluate. The personnel specialist who reviews your SF 171 will determine your eligibility solely on the qualifications you have described on that form. Be sure that the experience you describe is not only accurate but does not require the personnel specialist to “read between the lines” or guess what you mean. You will find that only clearly stated, substantiated experience is given credit toward qualifying you for a job.

EXAMPLE: You are applying for a job as an Accounting Technician and want to show some prior related volunteer experience. Do not write “I was the bookkeeper for the local Thrift Shop and kept all the financial records.” Rather, point out specifics such as: “I maintained Thrift Shop records which required accuracy in selecting, posting and consolidating sales and other financial information. Balanced and reconciled customer accounts with general Thrift Shop records. Completed and issued checks to customers. Prepared Thrift Shop operating budget. Monitored financial position throughout the year and advised manager when adjustments had to be made to ensure adequate income level. This work required me to make math computations, and prepare quarterly income and expense statements. I have also had one year of junior college which included six semester hours of accounting courses.”

Be specific about the skills you used in each volunteer experience. Use action verbs to describe what you did. Indicate the beginning and ending dates during which you performed the volunteer duties, as well as the actual time spent working (e.g., average number of hours per week). It is important to keep accurate records of all your volunteer hours because this data is credited in relation to a full work week and used as documented experience. Since much volunteer work is done on a “part-time” basis, you can see the necessity for keeping accurate personal record of the time you spend in those activities.

EXAMPLE: Using the volunteer experience in the previous example, you could indicate that the duties as the Thrift Shop bookkeeper took up approximately 20 hours each week and you performed those duties for two years. Since the regular work week is 40 hours, you would be given credit for half of a work week on the average and the time credited would be one year of experience. If you had worked an average of 10 hours a week (or $\frac{1}{4}$ of a work week), the overall two years would be translated to six months experience.

Even if you're not intending to apply for a Federal job right now, it's a wise idea to establish and maintain your Volunteer Career Portfolio. Keep copies of volunteer duty descriptions and the time you've spent at each type of job. Those details are easy to forget as you move from post to post. If you have received letters of appreciation or have been commended for certain service, save them for future reference especially if they contain specific skills you have demonstrated for particular projects you have handled. Attend SF 171 preparation workshops which are widely offered at Army installations usually through the local Civilian Personnel Office, Army Community Service, or the Federal Women's Program. You will get excellent pointers on how to prepare a good application and a practice session at presenting your life experiences on paper.

Remember: Keep good records of your volunteer experience, do your homework on what experience a particular job requires, and describe your experiences clearly and accurately when applying for that job. Your volunteer efforts can translate into career advancement. You can get the credit you deserve!

WHY DOCUMENTATION IS IMPORTANT

By thoroughly recording your past and present work experience, you will be able to analyze the skills you have acquired and the functions you have performed through both paid and unpaid work.

A complete record of your experience will help reveal your areas of expertise and thereby help you to plan for your future. Based on this record, you may decide, for example, to pursue new directions that involve acquiring new skills.

In summary, documentation is important because it will help you to evaluate:

1. What you have done in the past.
2. What you are currently doing.
3. What you would like to do in the future.

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER LOG

Volunteer's Name: _____			
Date	Assignment/Activity	Hours	Notes/Comments

JOB DESCRIPTION RECORD

Job Title_____ Dates of Work_____

Organization Name_____

Number of Hours per Week_____

Location_____ Telephone () _____

Supervisor_____ Title_____

MAJOR DUTIES

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

RESPONSIBILITY

MERCHANDISING YOUR VOLUNTEER SERVICE
FOR
JOB CREDIT

Contents

	PAGE
Introduction	106
Self Appraisal--the First Step	107
Preparing a resume	112
The Cover Letter	118
Volunteer Experience and the Federal Civil Service System	120
Record Keeping--the Volunteer Career Portfolio	124
Appendixes	
A. Outline and Instructions for Completing a Chronological Resume	127
B. Sample for Chronological Resume --All Paid Employment	128
C. Sample for Chronological Resume --All Volunteer Employment	129
D. Outline and Instructions for Completing a Combination Functional/Chronological Resume	130
E. Sample Combination Functional/Chronological Resume Using Volunteer Experience and Part-time Paid Employment	132
F. Sample Combination Functional/Chronological Resume Using Mainly Volunteer Employment	134
G. Sample Volunteer Job Description	136
H. Sample Volunteer Work Experience/Reference Format	138
I. Sample Educational Record	139
J. Sample Volunteer Log	140
K. Bibliography	141

CAN VOLUNTEERING REALLY HELP ME GET A JOB?

YES! Volunteering provides a useful way to:

- Test a career field to see if you like it and learn what training may be needed.
- Explore new interests.
- Get documented work experience for your resume.
- Develop skills needed for a new career direction.
- Make contacts.
- “Get your foot in the door.”

For employed military spouses who are highly mobile, volunteering may at times, be:

- The only way to work in your career.
- The best way to obtain work experience and keep skills updated in your career field.
- The better career building step than working in a paying job outside your field.

Mobile spouses should think in terms of portable skills, not portable careers; volunteering is an excellent way to develop new and portable skills.

SELF APPRAISAL – THE FIRST STEP

You want a job, and you feel that somewhere, some employer has precisely the job you want—one that fully utilizes your knowledge and abilities and provides challenges and opportunities for advancement.

You have a product to sell—your knowledge, skills and experience. What you need to know is how to market it most effectively. Whether you have never held a paying job or are re-entering the job market, you should decide exactly what your qualifications are. You need a detailed inventory of your background and experience so that you will know exactly what assets you have to offer an employer.

No matter what type of job you seek, your inventory will be a basic tool in your search. If you are marketing your skills for a professional or office position, it will contain the information you need to prepare your resume. If you are looking for work in a skilled trade or other field in which resumes are not expected, your inventory will help you decide how to present your qualifications at a job interview and be your source for the facts, dates, and other information you will need to give an employer.

To prepare your inventory chart, follow the outline below. Write all the data you think might help you in your search. Later, you can weed out the list and select the assets that are relevant to the job you seek.

WORK HISTORY

List all of your jobs, including part-time, summer and of course volunteer work. For each job, give the name and address of your employer, your job title, the details of your duties, dates employed and hours per week worked. Then ask yourself:

- What did I like about each job? Why?
- What did I dislike about each job? Why?
- Why did I leave?

EDUCATION

The schools you attended and the dates, the principle courses you took and the degrees you received. The business, vocational, on-the-job training, or special courses and training you took, the dates and any certificates you received. Include any scholarships and honors received.

Then ask yourself:

- What courses or training did I like best and why?
- What courses or training did I dislike and why?

INTEREST, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

This area may comprise a significant part of your job qualifications. Even if not directly related to a job, they may help you decide what your best talents are and, therefore, the best work options to explore.

If you are a recent graduate, think about what extra curricular activities you enjoyed most in school. What are your hobbies or special talents? Do you play a musical instrument, speak another language, enjoy sports, recreation and outdoor activities, or draw?

Ask yourself: What personal qualities do I have that make me good at certain work? Are your strong points initiative, imagination, leadership, ability to organize, willingness to follow orders, interest in detail or ability to work with people? What did I learn in my volunteer positions that I can use in a paid position?

WHY IDENTIFY SKILLS?

The process of skill identification is often not an easy task, nor is its importance in getting a job well understood. Therefore, it's easy to minimize your efforts in this area and concentrate on more concrete information such as formal job experience and education. BUT, an understanding of skills—what you can do, what abilities you have will:

- Provide you with a new method for understanding and communicating things about yourself relevant to employment and the job search.
- Reinforce your self-esteem and increase your confidence from a review of your past achievements and accomplishments. You will then be able to clearly identify things of importance that you have done, and probably never given yourself credit for having accomplished.
- Help you in your decision-making, i.e., developing an action plan to carry out your decisions and obtaining whatever goals you set for yourself.
- Assist you in resume writing.
- Prepare you for a job interview.

REMEMBER—even though many skills may be a basic part of your nature, they are skills and therefore, are important for you to identify so you can best market yourself to an employer. Figure 2-1 contains a checklist of skills that vary in importance from job to job. Using the scale, rate the traits that describe you best. Be honest, but try to avoid these common pitfalls:

DON'T

- Undervalue your unique skills—this could hurt in identifying your work options.
- Overlook the small, but important skills you use everyday.
- Dwell on your weakness or lack of skills. Instead, maintain a positive approach. You earn a living for what you can do, not for what you can't do.

SKILLS CHECKLIST

The following is a sample checklist of skills that vary in importance from job to job. Using the scale, rate the skills descriptive of you now (versus those you wish you had):

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. not a skill of mine | 3. a moderate skill |
| 2. a beginning skill | 4. definitely one of my skills |

---**ABSTRACTING/CONCEPTUALIZING** – ideas, relationships, facts, concepts.

---**ADVISING** – people, organizations.

---**ANALYZING** – data, interrelationships, social situations, trends.

---**ATTENTION TO DETAIL** – in design, organizing, writing.

---**AUDITING** – assessing financial status.

---**BUDGETING** – costs, time, resources.

---**COORDINATING** – events, activities, schedules, committees.

---**COUNSELING** – people with emotional, financial, life or social concerns.

---**DELEGATING** – tasks, responsibilities, authority.

---**DEVELOPING/PLANNING/DESIGNING/CREATING** – programs, methods of operation, plans, products, systems, interior space, events, future needs.

---**DISPLAYING/LAY-OUT** – ideas, results, products, newspapers, magazines, publications.

---**EDITING/READING** – newsletters, quickly for content, with great care.

---**EVALUATING** – performance, outcome.

---**FUNDRAISING** – committee work, political, door-to-door, mail/phone.

---**GROUP FACILITATING/MEDIATING** – for support, communication, problem solving, competing interests, differing groups.

---**INTERVIEWING** – for information, applicants.

---**ORGANIZING** – people, activities, work loads, information.

---**PRIORITIZING/GOAL-SETTING** – tasks, responsibilities, goals.

---**RECORD KEEPING** – files, books, finances, services.

---**RECRUITING** – volunteers.

---**REMEMBERING** – events, people, data, information.

---**RESEARCHING/INFORMATION GATHERING** – extracting or obtaining information from printed material, people, data, surveys.

---**SELLING/MOTIVATING** – self, ideas, projects, products, generating support for ideas, generating financial support, influencing policy, inspiring others to perform, to solve problems, achieve better results.

---**SKETCHING/DRAWING/PAINTING** – posters, diagrams, charts.

---**SPEAKING** – in public, with groups/individuals, with clarity, being articulate.

---**SUPERVISING/ADMINISTERING** – people, projects, programs, activities.

---**TEACHING** – skills, concepts, procedures.

---**TRAINING** – volunteers, students, scouts.

---**TRANSLATING** – foreign language.

---**WORK FROM SCALE** – with models, patterns.

---**WRITING/CREATIVE WRITING** – speeches, advertising copy, proposals, reports, manuals, poems, stories.

Now, list all the skills you rated 4 starting with the one that describes you most. If you only have a few traits rated 4 include traits rated 3.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

List 4 to 6 skills you would like to develop.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PREPARING A RESUME

Your inventory charts should contain all the information you need to prepare your resume. You now have to **SELECT, ARRANGE,** and **ORGANIZE** this raw material in the way that best relates your background to the job you seek.

Remember, the main purpose of a resume is to get you a job interview. Therefore; your summary of relevant paid and non-paid work experience, marketable skills, and education should be written in terms of the **PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER'S NEEDS.** Your resume should relate your skills and accomplishments to the requirements of the job offered by the employer.

When writing a resume – DO:

- Be concise. Keep resume to one or two pages in length.
- Put the most important information first because resumes frequently are not read from the beginning to end.
- Begin with the use of action words of the correct tense, and in descriptive phrases, to detail the skills, responsibilities, and accomplishments of each relevant work experience, paid or non-paid. Figure 3-1 contains a list of sample action words, and Figure 3-2, a model to assist in developing sentences around these words.
- Select key phrases and words appropriate to career field at which you are aiming.
- Make resume visually pleasing and easy to read. Be consistent in form used. Use good spacing, wide margins, indentations, capitalizations and underlining to highlight the resume.
- Use good quality, preferable white or off-white paper, neatly typed and duplicated by offset printing or excellent quality copying. Copy must be clear and dark.
- Present a positive picture of yourself. You need to create an interest in your unique qualifications.

DON'T

- Use 'I' or other personal pronouns.
- Use complete sentences or narrative forms.

DON'T (continued)

- Include personal information, salary history or salary requirements, reason for leaving job, names of past supervisors or negative information that may work against you.
- Use the word 'volunteer' or separate volunteer work from paid experience.
- Include a 'job objective' unless it is very specific and the resume is being written for only one type of job (e.g., lab technician in a small hospital). A job objective that is too general makes you appear unfocused, while one that is too specific limits the use of the resume and may serve to screen you out. Your objective may be stated in your individually typed cover letter which specifically relates your qualifications to each job and accompanies each resume.
- List references on a resume. Have them typed on a separate sheet and available if asked.
- Use abbreviations and unnecessary phrases such as 'was responsible for' (substitute an action word).

ACTION WORDS

communicated	attained	simplified	appraised
managed	summarized	observed	surveyed
reported	inspected	screened	molded
wrote	compared	generated	decided
interpreted	reviewed	created	promoted
researched	maintained	experimented	
planned	negotiated	demonstrated	
designed	renegotiated	integrated	
conceived	adjusted	visualized	
analyzed	reconciled	guided	
defined	recommended	prepared	
evaluated	updated	recognized	
perceived	improved	produced	
forecast	reevaluated	tasted	
estimated	assigned	determined	
programmed	enforced	reorganized	
organized	completed	disciplined	
selected	improvised	adjusted	
brought	identified	corrected	
enlisted	led	solved	
developed	mediated	identified	
administered	collected	contracted	
applied	inspired	established	
coordinated	prioritize	reduced costs	
directed	scheduled	sold	
dealt	supervised	prepared	
implemented	reviewed	invented	
responded	composed	presented	
assessed	explained	organized	
delegated	illustrated	was promoted	
initiated	advised	over saw	
expedited	enabled	taught	
performed	listed	handled	
counseled	facilitated	expanded	
encouraged	clarified	operated	
achieved	modified	edited	
instructed	trained	exhibited	
persuaded	structured	contacted	
motivated	referred	cut	
trained	anticipated	diagnosed	
stimulated	collaborated	chaired	

MODEL FOR DEVELOPING SENTENCES FOR RESUMES AND APPLICATION FORMS

Job hunters often fail to communicate adequately their past work experiences. When you use this model as a tool, it may enable you to describe your work duties more fully. Use most of the elements of the model when you want to emphasize an experience. However, you are not expected to use all the elements in every sentence you develop; sometimes you may use only a few.

ACTION

verb

OBJECT

what

purpose

final results

Now put the above elements all together and it will sound like an ACCOMPLISHMENT.

Examples

1. Filed medical records for large hospital surgical department to
(verb) (type) (what) (for whom) simplify billing procedures.
(purpose)
2. Wrote 16-page booklet, 'How to Conduct Leadership Training
(verb) (size) (what) (subject) Programs', for coordinators to volunteers in
order to promote (for whom) (purpose) staff development in the agency.
Received an award from headquarters personnel for superior writing quality.
(final results)
3. Organized 20-member youth group to canvas suburban community to
(verb) (size) (kind) (what) (purpose) increase support and collect funds for
political candidates. (for whom) forts resulted in campaign pledges of \$5000 after
only three days of canvassing. (final results)

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF RESUME FORMAT

You can organize your experience in one of two ways – by job or by function.

The **chronological format** presents your work experience within the time frames you spent on each job, in a reverse time sequence. This format is more traditional and is the best choice for those with steady and increasingly responsible work experience and whose recent employment is relevant to the job for which they are applying. An outline and samples are in the appendix.

The **functional format** clusters skills and abilities from your work experience and areas of involvement into functional bullets or comments (such as promotion training, sales, writing) with no mention of dates and names of organizations in this section of the resume.

This form is effective for those just out of school, individuals with little work experience, those who are entering the job market, or those changing careers. The functional format focuses on what you have done rather than where you have been and is useful for job seekers whose career paths are not immediately obvious. A sample list for FUNCTIONAL READINGS is at Figure 3-3.

Since a pure functional resume often works against job hunters, a combination functional/chronological format is recommended which includes a Work History section listing paid and nonpaid position job title, organization, city, state, and inclusive years of employment (in addition to the section described in the previous paragraph). Hours worked would not be included. An outline and samples are in the appendix.

SAMPLE FUNCTIONAL HEADINGS

Areas of Competence or Skill Areas for the Functional Resume:

Review the functions below and determine which best describes your abilities and are related to your job goal. Add others that are appropriate. Narrow the list to 2 to 5 top choices and use these on your functional resume.

Promotion	Social Work	Evaluation
Investment	Culinary	Employment
Graphic Design	Supervision	Interviewing
Materials Handling	Organization	Public Speaking
Volunteer Management	Purchasing	Fund Raising
Market Research	Acquisition	Teaching
Instruction	Planning	Testing
Construction	Scheduling	Advertising
Programming	Administration	Secretarial
Presentation	Data Processing	Public Relations
Production	Publicity	Accounting
Investigation	Personnel Admin...	Budgeting
Program Development	Human Service	Design
Staffing & Directing	Program Coordination	Engineering
Career Development	Systems & Procedures	Retailing
Product Development	Community Affairs	Sales
Writing & Editing	Communication	Research
Legal	Training	Finance
Consulting	Advising	Counseling

THE COVER LETTER

Unlike the Personal Qualifications Statement (Standard Form 171), the resume should always be accompanied by a cover letter. A cover letter is a personal communication written to a specific person in an organization. Whereas the same resume can often be sent to many potential employers, as it is a general overview of your background, a different cover letter must be written to each potential employer. The purpose of the letter is to show your uniqueness and to encourage the employer to look at your resume. It is important to spend time on your cover letter; it can make the difference between getting an interview or being turned away and between receiving a job offer or a rejection.

POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN WRITING COVER LETTERS:

- If possible, address the letter to a specific person. If the name and title of the individual responsible for filling the position is not in the ad, call the company to find out who that person is.
- Try to limit the letter to one page to hold interest.
- The first sentence should tell how you found out about the position and should include the job title, the newspaper, and date of the ad. If not from the newspaper, then list your source of information regarding the job vacancy. If you can, use the name of a mutual contact.
- Devote the body of your letter to brief facts about your experience and highlight accomplishments that may make you perfect for the job and will make the reader want to talk with you. Do not talk about what you want, rather about how your skills fit the needs of the company.
- An eye-catching graphic approach will give your letter a different appearance from others usually received:

Your Requirements

My Qualifications

You would then match each of the advertiser's specific requirements by slanting appropriate skills from your background to his/her needs.

- Another visually attractive format is one using 'bullets' (use 'bullet' function at the top of a Word document) to highlight accomplishments and brief facts about your experiences and how they relate to the employer's needs. You might introduce this information with: I believe that you may find the following aspects of my background of particular interest:

- _____
- _____

By extracting relevant skills from your background, you have relieved the employer of this task – a task that some would not bother with.

- **Do not oversell yourself**, but give clues that indicate that hiring you will help solve the employer's problems, i.e., high production, greater efficiency, reduced waste, better sales, higher profits.
- Generally, it is best to supply all information requested in an ad, but try not to be specific about your salary history or requirements so that you leave channels open for negotiation once the employer knows more about you. You may even be cutting yourself out of a chance for an interview. Consider such responses as: variable due to the nature of my activities or has been commensurate with the experience reflected in my resume.
- In the last paragraph, bid directly for a brief meeting (do not use the word interview). Write as though you expect the meeting to occur and word it in such a way that it leaves an opening for you to contact the advertiser without discouraging him from contacting you. A typical closing might be: I look forward to a meeting to discuss my qualifications and to learn further about your requirements.
- Use standard sized paper, the same as your resume is preferable. Do not use colored paper.
- By saving copies of your cover letters and borrowing paragraphs or bullets from past letters, future ones will involve less time and effort.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE AND THE FEDERAL CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

IN DETERMINING APPLICANTS' QUALIFICATIONS FOR FEDERAL JOBS, ALL WORK EXPERIENCE IS CONSIDERED, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER ANY COMPENSATION WAS RECEIVED. IF THE EXPERIENCE IS PERTINENT TO THE POSITION IN QUESTION, PAID AND UNPAID EXPERIENCES ARE GIVEN EQUAL CREDIT.

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EXAMPLE: A GS-4 Accounting Technician position requires 2 years of general experience. No specialized experience is required. General experience in this case is clerical work which has shown that you have arithmetic aptitude and ability, that you can be accurate and pay attention to detail, and that you have the ability to apply established procedures for recording and compiling data. For this type of work at this grade level, the standard also allows you to substitute formal education for the required experience. If you have courses which include bookkeeping or accounting, one-half academic year of study can be substituted for 6 months of experience. So 2 years of the appropriate coursework at the post high school level would meet all the basic X-118 requirements for this Accounting Technician job.

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EXAMPLE: You are applying for a job as an Accounting Technician and want to show some prior related volunteer experience. Don't write: I was the bookkeeper for the local thrift shop and kept all financial records. Rather, point out specifics such as: I maintained thrift shop records which required accuracy in selecting, posting and consolidating sales and other financial information. Balanced and reconciled customer accounts with general thrift shop records. Completed and issued checks to customers. Prepared thrift shop operating budget, monitored financial position throughout the year and advised manager when adjustments had to be made to insure adequate income level. This work required me to make arithmetic computations, and prepare quarterly income and expense statements. I have also had one year of junior college which included 6 semester hours of accounting courses.

Be specific about the skills you used in each volunteer experience. Use action verbs to describe what you did. Indicate the beginning and ending dates during which you performed the volunteer duties, as well as the actual time during which you performed the volunteer duties, as well as the actual time spent working (i.e., average number of hours per week). It is important to keep accurate records of all your volunteer service because you will need this data to document your experience on an employment application. In the Federal government, credit for experience is given on the basis of the regular work week; part-time experience is credited in relation to a full work week. Since much volunteer work is done on a part-time basis, you can see the necessity of keeping accurate personal records of the time you spend in those activities.

EXAMPLE: Using the volunteer experience in the previous example, you could indicate that your duties as the thrift shop bookkeeper took up approximately 20 hours each week and you performed those duties for two years. Since the regular work week is 40 hours, you would be given credit for half a work week on the average and the time credited would be 1 year of experience. If you had worked an average of 10 hours a week (or $\frac{1}{4}$ of the work week), the overall 2 years would be translated to 6 months experience.

EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT INTENDING TO APPLY FOR A FEDERAL JOB RIGHT NOW, IT'S A WISE IDEA TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN YOUR VOLUNTEER CAREER PORTFOLIO. KEEP COPIES OF VOLUNTEER DUTY DESCRIPTIONS AND THE TIME YOU'VE SPENT AT EACH TYPE OF 'JOB'. THOSE DETAILS ARE EASY TO FORGET AS YOU MOVE FROM POST TO POST. IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED LETTERS OF APPRECIATION OR HAVE BEEN COMMENDED FOR CERTAIN SERVICE, SAVE THEM FOR FUTURE REFERENCE, ESPECIALLY IF THEY CONTAIN SPECIFIC SKILLS YOU HAVE DEMONSTRATED OR PARTICULAR PROJECTS YOU HAVE HANDLED. ATTEND RESUME WORKSHOPS TO PREPARE WORKSHOPS, WHICH ARE WIDELY OFFERED AT ARMY INSTALLATIONS; USUALLY THROUGH THE LOCAL CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OFFICE, ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE OR THE FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM. YOU WILL GET EXCELLENT POINTERS ON HOW TO PREPARE A GOOD APPLICATION AND A PRACTICE SESSION AT PRESENTING YOUR LIFE.

REMEMBER

- Keep good records of your volunteer experience.
- Do your homework on what experience a particular job requires.
- Describe your experiences clearly and accurately when applying for that job.

Your volunteer efforts can translate into career advancement; you too can get the credit you deserve!

RECORD KEEPING – THE VOLUNTEER CAREER PORTFOLIO

WHAT IS A PORTFOLIO?

A volunteer Career Portfolio is a file or cumulative record of your accomplishments. It should grow with you.

WHY KEEP A PORTFOLIO?

A portfolio can serve two major purposes;

- To remind you of what you have done, what you have learned and what you have accomplished.
- To serve as a repository of work samples to demonstrate your effectiveness and responsiveness.

WHAT DOES A PORTFOLIO INCLUDE?

The following items are suggestions for what to include in a Volunteer Career Portfolio;

- Job descriptions for volunteer jobs.
- Samples or summations of your volunteer work accomplishments. Examples include brochures, programs, reports, correspondence, etc. Anything that concretely shows the breadth and scope of the effort.
- Letters of recommendation.
- Thank you letters for work performed.
- Examples of public recognition, i.e., letters of commendation, awards, etc. These should preferably specify exactly what it was you actually did.
- Newspaper clippings mentioning your name and achievement of the project you worked on.
- Records of speaking engagements.
- Examples of written work, including position papers, articles in newsletters, etc.
- Record of training received or workshops attended, to include title, dates, sponsoring agency and if any continuing educational credits were obtained.

WHAT FORMS CAN BE USED TO HELP?

While there is no one correct format for recording volunteer experience, some guidelines and sample forms are provided to help you retain the information you may want to use in the future, especially when seeking employment.

THE JOB DESCRIPTION FORM.

A job description should contain a position title, your supervisor's title (who you are directly responsible to), the purpose or objective of the job, specific description of duties, time requirements, qualifications necessary, training suggested, the amount of supervision to be expected and type and quantity of evaluation to be received. A sample is in the appendix.

VOLUNTEER WORK EXPERIENCE/REFERENCE FORM.

Even if you have a job description, the actual work you are doing will often differ from what's on your job description. This is true for both paid and non-paid positions. It is important that you verify what you have actually done, and this is the purpose behind the work experience form. It can also serve as a vehicle for your supervisor to provide you with special recognition. A sample format is provided in the appendix.

This form can be reproduced so that all your experiences can be recorded. Involvement in club activities should not be forgotten. The information should be as complete as possible and recorded at the time of the experience or immediately following it.

Organization and Address: The name and location of the organization is essential. Full zip code, phone with area code and, if applicable, the branch division or department in which you served should be included. This information is frequently difficult to remember after you've left the organization, so it should be recorded as soon as possible.

Title: The name of the job is crucial to creating a valid position in the minds of the future employers. If your job has no title or you think it should be called something else consult your supervisor, or, if you've left the agency, change it yourself. The title should represent what you actually did.

Number Supervised: This category should include those people actually supervised as well as clients actually worked with (i.e., Girl Scout leader, supervised 2 assistants and 30 girls).

Length of Service and Hours Worked: This information should be included to give a measure for the certification and comparison of volunteer time to the requirements of the job sought.

Name of Supervisor: The person who actually supervised your work should be listed. If you functioned in a loosely structured group – list the person to whom everyone was responsible (e.g., President of the Wives' Club, Director, etc.)

EDUCATIONAL RECORD FORM

Used to record all workshops, conferences and training (to include on-the-job training) received. Sample format is in the appendix.

Attended By: Refers to the audience. Who were the attendees?

Instructors: Include name, organization and degrees.

Course Description: Should be a brief summary. The program or more detailed course outline can be attached.

Signature of Supervisor: This is optional, but does provide further verification.

VOLUNTEER LOG

The volunteer log is a comprehensive and chronological record of your volunteer assignments within an organization. No matter how many and varied assignments you've had each needs to be documented so that you don't forget them and lose credit you deserve. The on going sample log in the appendix is an easy method to keep updated on your documentation.

OUTLINE FOR CHRONOLOGICAL RESUMES

Name
Address
Telephone Number

WORK EXPERIENCE	Reverse chronological order. Include paid and nonpaid positions. Title, Organization, Address, Dates. Each entry should consist of short descriptive phrases beginning with an action verb, detailing the skills and responsibilities of each job, with emphasis on accomplishments or achievements. Refer to Figure 3-2, "Model for Developing Sentences for Resume." Relevant volunteer experience should be integrated with paid experience. If the job has no specific title, create one.
EDUCATION	Degree, Major, Institution, City, State, Year of Graduation. This section can precede WORK EXPERIENCE if it is recent and relevant to job sought. Use reverse chronological order listing highest degree first. Include other <u>relevant</u> training, such as workshops and seminars.
HONORS, AWARDS:	If relevant to job sought. Can be separate section or with education.
CREDENTIALS, LICENSES, SPECIAL SKILLS:	If relevant to job sought.
LANGUAGES:	If relevant; specify degree of fluency.
PUBLICATIONS:	If relevant; separate page if lengthy.
PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION (or) MEMBERSHIPS:	If relevant
REFERENCES:	Available upon request (Optional; may be omitted).

Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of references should be listed on a separate sheet of paper and given to the potential employer after the interview.

SAMPLE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

NAME
ADDRESS
TELEPHONE NUMBER

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE.

Administrative Assistant, Personnel Department, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. 1976 to present.

Analyze institution's staff for percentage of female and minority group member distribution, develop institutional affirmative action goals, write required reports, and comply with and enforce federal Equal Employment Opportunity Laws. Researched, designed, and wrote six 20 to 40 page administrative and procedural handbooks for student and faculty use. Supervise two work/study students, coordinate their work schedules, and monitor their work loads. Assess their strengths and weaknesses recommending promotions as appropriate. Test and interview clerical job applicants and then assess their suitability for employment with the university.

Secretary to Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Personnel Department, Data Beta Manufacturing Company, Falls Church, VA. 1974 to 1976.

Assisted supervisor in developing and organizing summer program for disadvantaged minority youth. Researched sources for securing potential and minority group member applicants, and then advertised all company job openings therein. Oriented new clerical and blue-collar employees to company's policies, procedures, and benefits. Expedited employment inquiries for supervisory review and, as appropriate, wrote rejection letters or arranged for interview appointments.

EDUCATION

B.S. Psychology, Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA, 1974.

Workshops in counseling, equal employment opportunity, communication effectiveness, speed reading, testing and assessment, and industrial relations.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Personnel and Guidance Association
Association of Equal Employment Professionals

SAMPLE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME (ALL JOBS ARE VOLUNTEER)

NAME
ADDRESS
TELEPHONE NUMBER

WORK HISTORY

Mental Health Worker, Apt Community Outreach Program, Hanover, Pennsylvania. 1980 to present.

Counsel approximately 12 youth per week to help them solve their drug dependency and alcohol problems. Create innovative approaches appropriate to the specific needs of the individuals participating in the program. Maintain accurate client records by detailing weekly counseling sessions. Facilitate group meetings for clients with long-term addictions.

Coordinator, Lancaster Boys' Club, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. 1977 to 1980.

Implemented plans for the creation of this 125 member organization which was formed to provide supervised recreational activities for youth. Independently wrote a 20-page proposal and then gave a 1-hour presentation to the town council to explain the merits of the proposed organization. Recruited and supervised 12 volunteer staff members to oversee building and grounds maintenance. Designed and produced all publicity and member recruitment handouts. Ordered office and athletic supplies and equipment for facility's first year of operation.

Facility Resource Consultant, Lampshire Military Base, Marquette, Kansas. 1974 to 1977.

Coordinated written relocation information developed for incoming personnel to large Midwestern facility. Consulted with medical, educational, food and supply distribution services to obtain literature pertinent to the needs for new residents. Assessed and revised existing procedures for helping individuals of all ages adapt to the facility.

EDUCATION

Undergraduate work in Psychology, English, and Business Administration, University of Iowa, Ames, Iowa. 1968 to 1970.

OUTLINE FOR COMBINATION FUNCTIONAL/CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME:

Name
Address
Telephone Number

AREAS OF COMPETENCE:	Pick 2 to 5 functional categories (skill areas) relevant to job sought, such as Management, Community Organization, Program Development, Public Relations, Writing/Editing, etc. Extracting from all work experience, both paid and volunteer, describe each area in terms of skills and responsibilities. Give special emphasis to any accomplishments. Refer to "Model for Developing Sentences for Resume" on page 113. Areas can be rearranged when applying for different jobs or when a new focus is needed.
WORK HISTORY (or) PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE: (reverse chronological order).	Job Title, Organization, City, State, Inclusive Years. Job Title, Organization, City, State, Inclusive Years. *If job had no title, create one.
EDUCATION:	Degree, Major, Institution, City, State Year of Graduation. This section can precede AREAS OF COMPETENCE if it is recent and relevant to job sought. Use reverse chronological order, listing highest degree first. Include other relevant training such as workshops and seminars.
HONORS, AWARDS:	Separate section or with education.
CREDENTIALS, LICENSES, SPECIAL SKILLS:	If relevant to job sought.
LANGUAGES:	If relevant; specify degree of fluency.
PUBLICATIONS:	If relevant; separate page if lengthy.
PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS (or) MEMBERSHIPS:	If relevant.
REFERENCES:	Available upon request (Optional; may be omitted).

Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of references should be listed on a separate sheet of paper and given to the potential employer, as appropriate after the interview.

**SAMPLE COMBINATION FUNCTIONAL/CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME FOR A
WOMAN REDIRECTING HER EXPERIENCE, MUCH OF WHICH IS
VOLUNTEER AND PART-TIME, TOWARD A CAREER IN SALES AND
FUNDRAISING:**

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

SKILL AREAS

SALES

- Sold cosmetics and household products to 400 private clients, grossing over \$10,000 in sales in 1 year.

FUNDRAISING

- Raised over \$250,000 for national non-profit medical association through annual fundraising event.
- Increased Saturday sales in clothing store by 30 percent in 9 months.

MANAGEMENT

- Managed medium-sized clothing store during manager's absence.
- Planned and coordinated major fund-raising activity for national firm.
- Oversaw promotional activities, recruited and interviewed staff, and administered agency budget.
- Planned and administered educational events and trips for adolescents.

SUPERVISION

- Supervised a staff of 5 volunteers for non-profit medical association.
- Supervised the recreation activities of 10 youth over a 2-year period.
- Managed group of 75 youth and 7 adults on weekend area wide camping trip.

WORK HISTORY

Salesperson, Joe's Clothing Store, Pope, Maine. 1978 to 1983.

Sales Representative, Avon, Inc., Bethel, KY. 1972 to 1978.

Manager of Walk-a-thon, Cancer Society, Po, KY. 1975 to 1976.

Youth Coordinator, Boy Scouts of America, In, KY. 1969 to 1971.

EDUCATION

Courses in Business Management and Finance, Bethel Community College, Bethel, Kentucky. 1976 to 1979.

**SAMPLE FUNCTIONAL/CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME FOR WOMAN
REDIRECTING HER EXPERIENCE, MUCH OF WHICH IS VOLUNTEER,
TOWARD A CAREER IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:**

NAME
ADDRESS
TELEPHONE NUMBER

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

TRAINING

Wrote 110 page training manual for the care of isolated patients in state-wide nursing homes. Developed remedial training concepts for 150 community volunteers working with disadvantaged youth. Created 5-day awareness training program for airline industry personnel to foster better understanding of disabled passenger needs. Wrote 60-page proposal for training counselor working with ex-offenders which resulted in \$250 million in federal funding.

TESTING

Administered personality and intelligence tests, including the Wechsler and MMPI, to 400 ex-offenders and high school students. Evaluated, tested, and developed psychological and skill profiles for participants. Consulted with psychologist on results and client program plans. Made referrals, as a result of testing, to self-help centers.

ORGANIZING

Organized crafts, games, and field trips for neighborhood youth during summer vacation. Counseled 50 teenage women on birth control methods and prenatal care. Wrote and delivered lectures to 28 community organizations in rural and metropolitan areas on the need to support mental health programs.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Advisor, Freeport Community Mental Health Association, Freeport, Maryland. 1979 to present.

Staff Assistant, Farway Detention Center, Farway, Maryland. 1976 to 1978.

Coordinator, Youth Testing Group, Ot, Maryland. 1975 to 1976.

Consultant in Awareness Training for Disabled Passengers, National Airlines, Washington, D.C. 1974 to 1975.

EDUCATION

M.S.W., Catholic University, Washington, D.C. 1973.

B.A., Fine Arts, Smith College, Elmira, New York. 1971.

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

I. **POSITION TITLE:** Army Community Service, Volunteer Supervisor

II. **RESPONSIBLE TO:** The ACS Officer.

III. **OBJECTIVE:**

To supervise and coordinate the Volunteer Corps of Army Community Service within the guidelines of AR 608-1 and DA Pamphlet 608-28.

IV. **DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:**

1. Assist in recruiting and interviewing prospective volunteers for the Army Community Service Program.
2. Assist in the development of orientation and training programs for volunteers and orientation training for new paid staff members.
3. Assign volunteers to various committees based on their interests and talents and with the concurrence of the supervising staff member and committee chairperson.
4. Appoint committee chairpersons with concurrence of supervising staff members.
5. Work with the Assistant Supervisor in maintaining accurate records of volunteer hours, training and awards.
6. Assist staff in organizing semi-annual award ceremonies.
7. Work with the staff and volunteers in evaluating the needs of the community and establishing new programs to meet those needs.
8. Counsel volunteers when problems arise.
9. Conduct regular monthly meetings with the volunteer coordinating committee.
10. Insure volunteer coordinating committee meeting minutes are prepared.
11. Attend regularly scheduled staff meetings.
12. Perform any other duties as requested by the staff or Installation Commander in relation to the Community Service Program.

V. TIME REQUIRED:

1. The Volunteer Supervisor will normally serve for 1-year. The term may be renewed by mutual agreement of the ACS Officer and volunteer.
2. A realistic determination of the required time commitment per week should be made. The actual schedule can be quite flexible if coordinated with the Assistant Supervisor.

VI. QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Previous knowledge of an experience with ACS programs or previous experience as a supervisor in some other social service agency.
2. Skill in effectively communicating with groups and individuals in order to motivate participation, and enhance information exchange and staff coordination.
3. Skill in supervising the work of others in order to promote personnel and program effectiveness.
4. Demonstrates an ability to communicate effectively in writing.
5. Has knowledge of the military structure and the local command.

VII. TRAINING SUGGESTED:

As funding allows, the Volunteer Supervisor will be designated to attend workshops, courses and conferences that will increase incumbents knowledge of ACS program management and implementation. Progressive training in volunteer management and implementation. Progressive training in volunteer management techniques is especially important.

VIII. SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION:

It is advisable for the Volunteer Supervisor to meet with the ACS Officer at a regularly scheduled time each week for coordination, planning, and supervision.

VOLUNTEER WORK EXPERIENCE/REFERENCE FORM

Agency/Organization Served

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Volunteer Job Title: _____

Description of skills, knowledge and abilities to perform duties, responsibilities of the job (include equipment used), and accomplishments.

Number and Type of Workers Supervised: _____

Dates of Service in this Job: From: _____ To: _____

Actual Hours in this Job: _____ per day _____ per week
_____ per month _____ total hours

Signature of Volunteer: _____

Signature of Supervisor: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Telephone: _____ Date: _____

Additional Comments: _____

SAMPLE EDUCATIONAL RECORD

Attended By: _____

Workshop, Conference, Training Title: _____

Sponsored By: _____

Date: _____ Total hours: _____

Instructor: _____

Title: _____

Course Description: _____

Credit Acquired: _____

Skills and Knowledge Acquired: _____

Signature and title of supervisor: (optional)

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER LOG

Volunteer's Name _____			
Date	Assignment/Activity	Hours	Notes/Comments

Volunteer
Opportunities

Volunteer
Coordinators

Service
History

Service
Record (VSR)

**Annual
Summary**

Profile

Volunteer
Hours

Application
History



Annual Summary

[← Back to Map](#)

Volunteer hours by day for a year, can be downloaded as DA Form 4713, Volunteer Daily Time Record.

Volunteer : Volunteer Joe

Year

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Total:
JAN																																0
FEB																																0
MAR																																0
APR																																0
MAY																																0
JUN																																0
JUL																																0
AUG																																0
SEP																																0
OCT																																0
NOV																																0
DEC																																0
Total:																															0	

NOTE: Totals may vary slightly from the sum of the hours displayed, since hours are rounded for display.

[Download as Form 4713](#)

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